



# Shoeless Summer

*John Bell*

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## **Shoeless Summer** John Bell

In the summer of 1923, Shoeless Joe Jackson, who was banned from organized baseball in 1921 for his alleged participation in the 1919 Chicago Black Sox World Series scandal, was signed on to play baseball for the Americus, Georgia semi-pro team of the independent South Georgia league. With the Americus club struggling, Joe Jackson came on board and turned things around not only for the team but the entire league. There was controversy with his playing at first, but it soon settled and made way for an astounding run of our national pastime. Shoeless Joe's time in Americus was capped off by leading the team to the league championship at the end of the season. Shoeless Summer, written by Americus native John Bell, tells the fascinating story of Shoeless Joe Jackson's days playing baseball in Americus in 1923. This book features a day-to-day chronology of the season with emphasis on the uproar that followed Americus signing the famed baseball outlaw to play for the team. Statistics and biographies of each of the Americus players, daily lineups and box scores, and the only photograph of Shoeless Joe with the Americus team in uniform known to exist make this a well-rounded piece of baseball history. The cities of Albany, Americus, Arlington, Bainbridge, Blakely, and Dawson each had teams in the South Georgia league. Shoeless Summer includes a complete list of players from each team as well as those who played in the major leagues. Baseball fans young and old will enjoy this factual account of one magical summer in a rural, baseball-crazed region on the country. "...He came to Americus, Georgia in 1923 and helped a struggling, hometown baseball team get back on its feet and win the league title from its chief sports rival. None of the fans really cared what he was accused of or what he did or didn't do. All they knew was that he was the greatest ball player they had ever seen, and for a short time, they could call him their own. When Shoeless Joe Jackson left Americus, he left memories of a hero to a small baseball town -- memories of a Shoeless Summer."

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